

## Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2247

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FOR THE SECRETARY FROM TOON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS

SUBJECT: ALLON ON THE ENTEBBE RESCUE OPERATION

1. DURING MY CALL ON ALLON ON JULY 12, FOREIGN MINISTER BRIEFED ME ON THE PROCEDURES BY WHICH THE GOI TOOK DECISION TO MOUNT THE RESCUE OPERATION AT ENTEBBE. ALLON SAID THAT RABIN, PERES AND HE CONSTITUTED THE CORE GROUP. WHILE DISCUSSIONS WERE CONTINUING THROUGH THE FRENCH TO TRY TO ARRANGE A PRISONER/HOSTAGE SWAP, CHIEF OF STAFF GUR AND MOSSAD CHIEF HOFI PRESENTED THE PLAN FOR THE RESCUE OPERATION TO THE THREE MINISTERS. THEY IN TURN COORDINATED FIRST WITH THE MINISTERIAL DEFENSE COMMITTEE AND THEN WITH THE ENTIRE CABINET. CABINET DISCUSSIONS WENT ON SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH PREPARATIONS FOR THE JOINT AIR/ARMY OPERATION. THE CABINET FINALLY APPROVED THE RESCUE OPERATION BY A UNANIMOUS VOTE, BUT IF THE CABINET HAD OPPOSED THE PLAN IT WOULD STILL HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE TO CALL THE ENTIRE OPERATION OFF. AT THE SAME TIME THAT THE CABINET WAS BEING BRIEFED, RABIN MET WITH THE CHARIMAN OF THE KNESSET FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND SECURITY COMMITTEE, NAVON, AND WITH THE HEADS OF THE OPPOSITION, BEGIN AND RIALT, WHO ALSO PLEDGED THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE OPERATION.

2. ALLON SAID THAT SOME THOUGHT WAS GIVEN AT THE OUTSET TO ASKING THE FRENCH TO COORDINATE IN MOUNTING THE OPERATION BUT THIS MATTER WAS NEVER BROACHED TO THEM. ISRAEL ONLY

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DISCUSSED A POLITICAL APPROACH WITH THE FRENCH. ALLON

COMMENTED THAT THE FRENCH HAD BEEN VERY CORRECT THROUGHOUT THE WEEK. SAUVAGNARGUES HAD PHONED ALLON TWICE TO REASSURE HIM THAT FRANCE WOULD NOT BACK OUT OF ITS ROLE AS A GO-BETWEEN EVEN IF WALDHEIM CAME INTO THE PICTURE.

3. ALLON AGREED THAT, IF SUCH AN OPERATION HAD TO TAKE PLACE, IT WAS GOOD THAT IT HAPPENED IN UGANDA WHERE ISRAELI INTELLIGENCE WAS COMPLETE AND OF HIGH QUALITY AND WHERE NEITHER THEY NOR WE HAD DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. ALLON STRESSED HOWEVER, THAT WERE SUCH A SITUATION TO DEVELOP IN THE FUTURE IN WHICH ISRAEL HAD KNOWLEDGE THAT A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT WAS COOPERATING WITH THE TERRORISTS, IT WOULD AGAIN MOUNT A SIMILAR OPERATION IF NECESSARY EVEN THOUGH IT HAD DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THAT COUNTRY. ALLON RECALLED THE ISRAELI SEIZURE OF THE MISSILE VESSELS FROM CHERBOURG AS AN ILLUSTRATION OF ISRAELI READINESS TO SAFEGUARD ITS INTERESTS BY MILITARY MEANS EVEN WITH A COUNTRY WITH WHICH IT ENJOYS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.  
TOON

SECRET

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